

Flight Jacket

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Quote

"My father gave 26 years to the Air Force, but he gave two sons to the Corps"

— James Webb
former Marine and Secretary of the Navy, during a speech given at the Iwo Jima War Memorial

Freshman pilots make grade at Tiger U

by Cpl. Aubrey Bell

PAO, MCAS Miramar

Heavy Marine Helicopter Squadron 361 has established an introductory course here for its freshmen CH-53E pilots.

The course, called Flying Tiger University, is a compilation of various manuals, tests, and quizzes introduced in the training courses of Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron 1 stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz.

Capt. Bruce L. Bridgewater, squadron Weapons Tactics Instructor pilot training officer, modeled the course after an example he saw from Medium Marine Helicopter Squadron 268. Bridgewater expounded on the idea and implemented manuals and publications associated with the CH-53E.

The course is based on the principles of aviation: Electronic Warfare, Aerial Reconnaissance, Command and Control of Missiles and

Aircraft, Anti-air Warfare and Assault Support.

"HMM-268 has a Dragon University manual with a few publications in it," said Bridgewater about

HMM-268's freshman pilot training course.

"I picked out manuals from the WTI course that were relevant to the CH-53E for our course. "The

Aircraft Commanders to continue their professional military education as pilots. "We started this fall,

See **Tiger U**, Page 11



photo by Cpl. Aubrey Bell

Tiger U is designed around the teachings of Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron 1, with elements such as Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel missions and Terrain Flight maneuvers (shown above). Junior pilots can learn from these established techniques before getting behind the stick of a "Super Stallion."

'TRAP' missions ... Flying tactical is name of game

by Cpl. Aubrey Bell

PAO, MCAS Miramar

The sun painted the skyline blood red as a Flying Tiger rose from the desert floor, and bared its teeth to an unseen adversary, Feb. 7-12.

The CH-53E "Super Stallion," from Heavy Marine Helicopter Squadron 361, is ready for a fight, with crew chiefs at the doors, .50 caliber machine guns armed and ready; looking like death from the skies.

This is the image which would probably strike fear in the hearts of any foreign power with the misfortune of crossing the world's finest, the United States Marine Corps, but for today, it is just training, and the skyline is over Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz.

The training is Marine Division Tactics Course, and it is designed, among other things to ensure the safe expedient extraction of Marines from the combat environment, called a TRAP, or Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel. This is just one

of many responsibilities of HMH-361.

The day begins at the Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron 1 Building, home of the Weapons and Tactics Instructors Course. The screen in a briefing auditorium reads, "Operation Sledgehammer." It is only 6 a.m., but there is already a host of fixed and rotor wing pilots on hand.

"A Tomcat is down and we have information that the aggressor country is sending in troops to get sensitive data off of the downed aircraft," said Capt. Bruce L. Bridgewater, WTI pilot training officer for HMH-361. "Our mission is to get in there, evade enemy aircraft, destroy the data and get the pilot out."

After going over the rules of engagement, flight codes, mission goals, and the area of operation, the aggressors and defenders separate into different smaller briefs to formulate their plans according to the guidelines set forth in the main brief. Only yards away on the flightline, HMH-361 Marines

See **TRAP**, Page 10



by Lance Cpl. Christopher E. Rodriguez

3d MAW Band spreads goodwill through song

The 3d Marine Aircraft Wing Band, based here, departed Feb. 9 for a goodwill concert tour of Southwest Asia. The tour was developed to promote goodwill and build upon existing friendships of Arab countries in the region, as well as entertain service members deployed or stationed overseas. The band was invited to return to the Arabian Gulf Region to continue the tradition of friendship and cultural exchange established during last year's inaugural tour.

About 50 Marines from the band are scheduled to perform in a variety of venues for a diversity of audiences, both civilian and military, in several countries including Oman, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Bahrain. In addition to traditional marches, the band boasts an eclectic repertoire of musical expressions including Dixieland, traditional jazz, easy listening and rock and roll music. The band is scheduled to return to Miramar March 3.

Flight Jacket



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MTACS-38 dominates Pistol Competition

by Sgt. Ted L. Hansen

PAO, MCAS Miramar

Marine Tactical Air Control Squadron 38 dominated the 2000 Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area Intramural Pistol Competition held here Feb. 4-10.

Marines from MTACS-38 took home the first and third place individual trophies and the first place Pistol Team trophy as well.

Sergeant Michael A. Lawson, 3d Marine Aircraft Wing protocol noncommissioned officer, placed first in the individual pistol competition with a score of 545 of a possible 600 points.

The 32-year-old native of Bristol, Pa., was the top overall rifle/pistol shooter in MCABWA Intramural Marksmanship Competition in 1998 and 1999.

According to Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brett D. Brown, range officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron here, Lawson's pistol scores will likely earn a silver or gold



photo by Sgt. Ted L. Hansen

Sgt. Michael A. Lawson, MTACS-38 pistol team, aims for the "X" during the MCABWA Intramural Pistol Competition. Lawson finished first in individual pistol competition and was the top overall shooter in MCABWA the past two years.

medal at the upcoming Western Division matches.

The second place trophy went to Sgt. Edward A. Merkel, a TRC-170 technician, Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38, with a score of 509. 2nd Lt. Christopher W.

Adkins, assistant targeting officer, MTACS-38, who shot a 502 finished third.

The champion MTACS-38 pistol team was lead by Staff Sgt. Joseph A. Quinto, team captain, and coach, Lance Cpl. Sean Brady. Team shooters included Lawson, Adkins, Sgt. Gerad C. Greeno, special intelligence communicator, and Cpl. Luke A. Reinhart, intelligence systems analyst. Marines from MTACS outshot the second place team from MWCS-38 by nearly 50 points.

This year's competition was conducted in a different format from past years. Brown formatted the Intramural Pistol Match identical to the upcoming Western Division Matches to be held at Wilcox Range aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., March 10-31. Competitors fired all stages of competition one-handed.

The course of fire consisted of 10 rounds slow fire in 10 minutes, two sustained fire

See **Pistol Range**, Page 3

Schmitt passes off 'Aces' to Hamilton

by Sgt. Ted L. Hansen

PAO, MCAS Miramar

Lt. Col. Michael H. Schmitt relinquished command of Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 to Lt. Col. Charles M. Hamilton at Mills Park here, Thursday.

Schmitt had commanded the "Aces" since July 1998. His next assignment will be to chair the Marine Wing Support Group Operational Advisory Group Table of Organization and Equipment Working Group.

Schmitt recalled his tenure as the commanding officer of MWSG-37 as a time of great accomplishment. "The Marines of this reinforced squadron have performed magnificently during my tenure. Beginning with our relocation from El Toro to Miramar shortly after I assumed command, until the presentation of a Meritorious Unit Citation in late January, the Aces have accomplished every mission with which they were tasked. They

were instrumental in the relocation of 3d Marine Aircraft Wing units to Miramar, as well as the construction, maintenance and rehabilitation of numerous station facilities. Unlike any other MWSS in the Marine Corps, this squadron routinely supported two Marine Air Groups in garrison while simultaneously supporting deployments, operations and exercises away from Miramar, including numerous Combined Arms Exercises and Weapons Training Instructor exercises. The Aces have repeatedly proven themselves to be at all times ready to provide aviation ground support to the 3d MAF and the station," said Schmitt.

Hamilton joins MWSS-373 after serving as the Operations and Plans Officer, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif., since August 1998.

The Jacksonville, N.C., native said he will ensure both mission accomplishment and quality of life are maintained under his command. "I intend to continue to provide the best combat service support the 3d MAF



Official USMC photo

Lt. Col. Charles M. Hamilton

deserves and has grown accustomed to receiving from MWSS-373, and ensure every Marine and Sailor, as well as their families, are taken care of during my tenure," said Hamilton. "I'm looking forward to the opportunity to assume command

See **COC**, Page 3

Dental reminder – Keep your smile bright, take care of pearly whites

Lt. Cmdr. Karen Lynch

13th Dental Company, MCAS Miramar

It is easier to prevent a problem than it is to fix it once it has already happened.

When dealing with children's teeth it is also considerably less expensive and easier on children to perform preventative maintenance, such as removing plaque build-up.

This proactive upkeep includes: tooth decay, poorly aligned teeth, injuries to the teeth and gum problems.

Tooth decay or more cavities, can be prevented in a number of ways. One way is a daily intake of fluoride. Fluoride makes teeth stronger to protect them against tooth decay. Parents can get their children fluoride by having them drink fluorinated community water or giving them fluoride tablets or drops. However, because San Diego does not add fluoride to its water supply, parents should invest in drops or the tablets. They can also get a topical fluoride treatment from a dentist.

Another way to stop cavities from forming is by removing the layer of germs that

grow on people's teeth daily. Teeth are susceptible to decay the moment these germs are present. Because of this, children's teeth should be brushed as soon as they have their first tooth in. Plaque grows daily, so people should brush their teeth at least twice a day.

Parents should also wipe a baby's teeth and gums clean with a damp washcloth or gauze pad after each feeding. Once the child is old enough to use a tooth brush, it is recommended by most dentists that parents and children use soft, nylon brushes.

Another factor in the fight against tooth decay is sugar. Dentists recommend minimizing sweet snacks and if they are eaten to consume them around daily meals when people are more likely to brush their teeth. Sticky candies are perhaps the worse culprits because they stick to the teeth and break them down longer than softer candies.

Other hidden sugars found in drinks, juices and even milk also need to be watched. Nursing babies should not fall asleep drinking either of these, but should have water, so they won't be exposed to sugar, which can cause irreversible damage.

Another issue surrounding dental health is injuries to the mouth and teeth. The best way to prevent these injuries from happening is to have children, who are involved in contact sports wear a mouth guard, which can be obtained from a dentist.

In the event that a tooth is knocked out, it is important for a child to know what measures need to be taken. Because time is critical in these types of injuries if the tooth is to be replanted successfully, then there are two steps that need to be employed. The first is to recover the tooth, but to not clean it. Instead, the child should keep it clenched between the lower lip and front teeth. Then, call a dentist immediately and state the problem.

In the case of a decayed tooth, treatment should be done immediately to keep it from getting worse. Small cavities require a minimum time to restore and cost relatively little. Early detection and treatment prevents extensive breakdown and resultant repair. It also stops premature loss of baby teeth and

See **Dental**, Page 11

Lacrosse coaches needed

Local San Diego high schools are looking for boys’ and girls’ lacrosse coaches and officials. Interested personnel, can call Bill Parry at (619) 553-8801.

Special meal announced

In observance of Black History month, Gonzales Hall dining facility will serve a special meal Friday, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. for \$3. Military family members, civilians and retirees are encouraged to participate. For more information, call Master Sgt. Sprawling at 577-1380.

House of Puerto Rico Association to host dinner

The local House of Puerto Rico Association is dedicated to teaching people about the Puerto Rican culture. Meetings are held the first Saturday of every month at 3 p.m. at the Hall of Nations in Balboa Park. They are also hosting a “*paella*” or dinner March 26 from 2-6 p.m. The “*paella*” is part of a fundraiser for museum construction. The cost is \$30 and anyone interested in the meetings or the paella, can call (858) 481-2995 for more information.

Mess Night scheduled

The noncommissioned officers of Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron here are holding a NCO Mess Night March 8 at the base Officer’s Club. The cost is \$20 per Marine. Marines are encouraged to show their shooting skills in rifle and pistol match. For more information, call Gunnery Sgt. Sammartino at 577-4260.

Rifle, pistol match scheduled

The Western Division Matches will be

held March 10-31 here. The competition is open to all Marines. Anyone interested must request orders no later than Wednesday. For more information, contact Gunnery Sgt. Schulz at 577-1788.

Narrator needed

The station Visual Information Support Center is seeking volunteers to do a narration Monday and Tuesday for a video production. Anyone interested should call Sgt. Shrubbs at 577-4322.

Scholarships available

VMFA-531 is hosting a Gray Ghost scholarship program awarding \$1,000 to a child of a former member of this squadron. Stipulations include the child’s parent must have received an honorable discharge and gross family income cannot exceed \$45,000 per year. For more information, call Col. Bob Schultz, USMC (ret.) at (252) 447-2555.

Semper Fit seeks resumes for Taekwondo trials

Applications are being accepted at the Semper Fit Center for the April 5-10 Taekwondo trials being held at Fort Indiantown, Pa. Resumes must be submitted no later than Feb. 28, and Marines must have command endorsements. For more information, call 577-4157.

YMCA sponsors essay contest

The Armed Services YMCA is holding an essay contest for high school students and other contests for younger children of military families. The essays must focus on the importance of reading. The deadline for entries is March 21. More information can be picked up at the library by calling 577-1261.

Pistol Range,

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drills of five rounds in 20 seconds, and two rapid fire drills of five rounds in 10 seconds.

According to Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton Base Bulletin 3591, dated Feb. 2., Marine Corps Matches will be held at Wilcox Range immediately following WDM, from March 31 to April 21.

The top 10 percent of competitors from the WDM will automatically have their orders modified to compete in the MCM.

However, according to the bulletin, about 250 Marines and Sailors compete in the WDM and about 120 continue on to the MCM.

Those competing in the MCM will have

COC,

continued from page 2

of the finest MWSS in the Marine Corps.”

Following in the Marine Corps footsteps of his father, a retired sergeant major, Hamilton was commissioned a second lieutenant in April 1982.

He began his career with 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, as a rifle and weapons platoon commander, among many other billets.

After receiving his augmentation and completing two Western Pacific deployments with 3/6, Hamilton was transferred to Marine Barracks, Bangor, Wash., in March 1986.

After serving as a guard company commander and guard officer at the barracks, Hamilton was redesignated as a transportation officer in October 1987.

His following assignments included duties with Marine Corps Security Forces Company, and Combat Service Support Detach-

ment, 1st Force Service Support Group, El Toro, Calif. During his time with CSSD-14, Hamilton and the detachment deployed to Saudi Arabia in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

Prerequisites for competing in WDM are a qualification of sharpshooter or higher with the service rifle. No prerequisites are given for firing with the service pistol.

Those wishing to compete must contact the appropriate personnel within their command. An initial list of team members and captains, and a list of support personnel was due Feb. 11.

A final list of team members and captains is due March 3. For more information about the WDM and MCM, see Camp Pendleton Base Bulletin 3591.

In July 1995, Hamilton was transferred to Headquarters, Marine Force Europe, Stuttgart, Germany. There he served as the Southern Plans Officer until his transfer to I MEF in August 1998.

Hamilton was promoted to his current rank Nov. 1, 1998. His personal awards include the Meritorious Service Medal with Gold Star, Navy/Marine Corps Commendation Medal, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

He and his wife, the former Michele Johnson of Long Beach, Calif., will celebrate their 14th wedding anniversary on Tuesday. The couple resides in Oceanside, Calif.

SkiCentral SoCal – Grab a board an get powder surfin’

by Lt. Col. Jonathan S. Ray

MCAS Miramar Department of Safety

The First Attempt

Congratulations! You’ve decided you want to try snowboarding for the first time. You might have some experience on skis or you may have never even seen snow before. No problem. Here are a few tips to make sure you get past that first day and move on to the wonderful world of carving on the groomed slopes, tricks in the snow park, or off in the powder where “Boards Rule.”

Equipment

You should rent all of your equipment when you set out for your first time. There is no sense making an investment of \$500 or more if the equipment is going to gather dust in your garage. Also, decline the temptation of borrowing your buddies board/binding and boots for your first time. When renting the equipment be certain to learn how to use and adjust it. A big factor in having a good first day on the slopes is having the right equipment which includes the right size board, the right type of board (yes, there are different style boards for different types of boarding) the right binding setup and the best fitting boots and helmet. Please *do not over-look the helmet*, especially in the SoCal mountain environment. The snow is generally hard packed and groomed vice the powder routinely found elsewhere. Additionally

helmets provide protection during the collision you will most likely encounter with another boarder, skier, tree or pole.

Remember, it’s easy to repair broken bones and let sore body parts heal, but soft spots on your brain are permanent. The use of wrist guards and knee guards is also highly recommended. Since the first day on a board is usually characterized by spending a great deal of time going from knees to “toosh” and catching yourself with your hands, wrist injuries are *very* common. Use the same wrist guards you use for roller blading if nothing else.

You should layer your clothing with the outer layer being some sort of waterproof jacket and pants. A nylon running suit will shed water and help keep you dry. Even if it’s a hot day you’ll get chilled because you’ll be spending a lot of quality time in the snow. Also wear sunglasses or goggles because it gets bright on the mountain. Don’t forget sunscreen on your face and lips. A sunny day on the slopes is as brutal as the beach sun.

Lessons

Definitely take a lesson the first time. Sure, your best friend has been snowboarding for years but that doesn’t mean he/she can get you up and down the hill safely and easily. It is recommended that you call ahead and find out when the begin-

See **Snowboarding**, Page 11



WING NOTES



**An Operational Overview of 3d MAW
Units Stationed Aboard MCAS Miramar**

• MAG-16 • MAG-11 • MACG-38 • MWSS-373

MAG-16

• **MALS-16 “Forerunners”:** The Forerunners have a detachment aboard the *USS Bon Homme Richard* supporting HMM-166 and another in Okinawa, Japan, supporting HMH-462 during their unit deployment.

• **HMM-161 “Greyhawks”:** The Greyhawks command element will attend a Rapid Response Planning Process in preparation for the squadron’s assignment as the Aviation Combat Element of the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit. All pilots, including the newly joined AH-1W “Cobra” and CH-53E “Super Stallion” pilots will be flying Night Vision Goggle missions, “TERF” and field carrier landing practice missions this week.

• **HMM-165 “White Knights”:** The White Knights are performing night training here and Terrain Flights at Twentynine Palms, Calif.

• **HMM-163 “Ridgerunners”:** A large detachment of Ridgerunners will return from Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., this week after finishing defensive maneuver, electronic warfare training, and supporting the Marine Air Ground Task Force demonstration at the MCAS Yuma Air Show. Back at Miramar, the squadron will conduct final evaluations to assign two pilots to helicopter aircraft commander status. Pilots and aircrew will also be training to perform missions while using their Nuclear, Biological and Chemical defense systems.

• **HMM-166 “Sea Elk”:** The Sea Elk are deployed aboard the *USS Bon Homme Richard* for a six-month Western Pacific deployment.

• **HMH-361 “Flying Tigers”:** The Flying Tigers are conducting day and night carrier qualifications aboard the *USS Boxer* and *Essex*. They will also do Terrain Flights and low-light missions in Yuma, Ariz.

• **HMH-465 “War Horses”:** Pilots and aircrew will demonstrate the versatility of the CH-53E Super Stallion this week, performing parachute, fast rope, Night Vision Goggle aerial refueling, and NVG external lift missions.

• **HMH-462 “Heavy Haulers”:** The Heavy Haulers are currently deployed to Okinawa, Japan, as part of the Unit Deployment Program.

• **HMH-466 “Wolf Pack”:** The Wolf Pack has pilots undergoing Night Systems Instructor checks here with Marine Aviation Weapons Tactical Squadron 1 from MCAS Yuma, Ariz.

MWSS-373

• **MWSS-373:** The squadron continues to support the 2d Marine Aircraft Wing at the Weapons Tactics Instructors course at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz.

MCCS teaches building blocks to success

by Tom Graneau

*Personal Financial Management Counselor,
MCAS Miramar*

The need to start taking control of your financial destiny now cannot be overemphasized. However, as you make your decision to accumulate wealth, you should be aware of four major obstacles that may hamper your progress.

The first and most deadly is *Procrastination*. Financial experts agree that your biggest enemy to building wealth is *yourself*. That’s right! Without question, *procrastination* is the most common causes of financial failure, and it’s nothing more than the old habit of putting things off for tomorrow. After all, with today’s deadlines, who has time to work on something that won’t directly affect you until 20 years in the future? As a result, you may find it easier to wait until life gets a little more “serious.”

As you move into your 30s, however, you will have a greater need to spend more money due to family demands. For example, your spouse, your house and your children will draw an enormous amount from your earnings for basic necessities. During that period of your life, you will be tempted to wait until you are in your 40s to plan your financial future, only to realize your children are graduating from high school and entering college. In your 50s, your kids will start getting married, and your parents will need financial assistance.

Habitual procrastinators pay a major price for their inconsistency. For example, assume you are 20 years old and you want

to raise \$100,000 by age 65. You need to invest only \$1,232 today (*10% annual return, taxes deferred*). On the other hand, if you wait until you are 50 years old, you will need to invest nearly \$22,500 to obtain the same \$100,000. This, my friend, is the *cost of procrastination*. As you can see, time is the major factor in determining how successful you will be.

Here is something you must remember ...*Time waits for no one, and there is never an ideal time for planning*. While you can always find a reason to put things off, you should do everything in your power to resist the temptation.

The second obstacle that will keep you broke is your *Spending Habit*. If you don’t have enough money to carry on your financial affairs on a daily basis, the problem rests with you. It has very little to do with the economy or world politics, but everything to do with how well you manage your finances. We all are guilty of piddling money away without paying attention to our daily financial routines. To avoid this problem, you must be observant of your spending habits. *That’s where you will find the key to your financial future*.

The third obstacle that will affect your financial progress is *Inflation*. Although we have grown accustomed to inflation over the past 25 years, it continues to have major impacts on the way we do business every day. For instance, over the past 23 years, inflation averaged 5.8% per year. Putting it another way, \$1,000 with 6% annual infla-

See MCCS, Page 11

MAG-11

• **MALS-11 “Devilfish”:** The Devilfish have a detachment deployed aboard the *USS John C. Stennis* supporting VMFA-314, another deployed to Iwakuni, Japan, with VMFA-232 and one with VMFAT-101 at a Fighter Weapons training course at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz.

• **VMFAT-101 “Sharpshooters”:** The Sharpshooters are undergoing Fighter Weapons training at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz.

• **VMFA (AW)-121 “Green Knights”:** The Green Knights are preparing for a deployment to Kuwait and United Arab Emirates as part of Operation Southern Watch.

• **VMGR-352 “Raiders”:** The Raiders are doing a logistics run for Naval Special Warfare Command to Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. They are also performing fixed-wing aerial refueling in Bristol Moa, Calif. and over the Pacific Ocean.

• **VMFA (AW)-225 “The Vikings”:** The Vikings are performing strategic tanking with Air Force KC-135s and KC-10s here in preparation for a Trans-Pacific movement.

• **VMFA-232 “Red Devils”:** The Red Devils remain deployed to Iwakuni, Japan, as part of the Unit Deployment Program.

• **VMFA-242 “Bats”:** The Bats are flying Air Combat Maneuvers over the Pacific Ocean. They also be provide close-air-support to Marine Aircraft Group 39 at Twentynine Palms, Calif.

• **VMFA-314 “Black Knights”:** The Black Knights remain deployed aboard the *USS John C. Stennis* during a six-month Western-Pacific deployment.

• **VMFA-323 “Death Rattlers”:** The Death Rattlers are flying air-to-air, air-to-ground and close-air-support missions in Eastern California, Arizona, and over the Pacific Ocean.

MACG-38

• **MTACS-38:** The squadron will hold a Theater Battle Management Core System Joint Fielding Acceptance Test and Fire Support Coordination course all week at the Tactical Air Command Center building here.

• **MASS-3:** Marines from the squadron continue to take care of their annual rifle and pistol qualifications at Wilcox Range, at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. The squadron also continues to prepare for an upcoming Combat Arms Exercise and a deployment to the Weapons Tactics Instructors course in Yuma, Ariz.

• **3d LAAD:** A section of the battalion is deployed to the Naval Air Strike Warfare Center at Naval Air Station Fallon, Nev., in support of exercise Desert Rescue. Another section of the battalion is deployed to the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, Calif., to conduct training exercises.

• **MWCS-38:** Fifty Marines from the squadron are wrapping up a week of annual rifle qualifications today at Wilcox Range at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif. Today ends Alpha company’s involvement in the Weapons Tactics Instructors Course Communications Conference, which began Feb. 15. Congratulations are in order for the 10 Marines in the squadron who took second place in the Command and Conquer Paintball Competition held at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton recently.



Sergeant Major’s Corner



by Sgt. Maj. Ira J. Lott

MCABWA Sergeant Major

A lot of interesting answers to last weeks questions, but no winners. Many people were confusing Aug. 26, 1942, the day the first Black man set foot on Montford Point, as the day of the first enlistment. Also, many thought that Sgt. Maj. Hashmark Johnson and Sgt. Maj. Edgar Huff were the first to enter boot camp.

Remember that Sgt. Maj. Johnson was serving in the Navy at that time and had to request a discharge in order to join the Marine Corps. Sgt. Maj. Huff, one of the first Black Drill Instructors, was the first Black to retire after 30 years of service and the most senior sergeant major ever in the Marine Corps. His date of rank as a Sgt. Maj. was Dec. 1955 and he retired Sep. 28, 1972.

The correct answers are: June 1, 1942 and the first to enlist were Alfred Masters, and George O. Thompson on June 1; George W. James and John E. L. Tillman on June 2. All enlisted from the

8th Reserve District, Headquartered at Pensacola, Fla. Today’s question is below.

Have you noticed that the PX is once again reaching out to its customers? How do you ask? Beginning Feb. 20, the Main Barber Shop will open at 8 a.m. on Sunday’s! Still closing at 6 p.m. though. The Flightline Exchange has expanded to include laundry drop off and pickup. God bless Mr. Gary Walls. Not to be out done, the MCCS guru’s are bringing Tackle Football to Miramar. I know there are many Jevon Kearsse wannabes out there so give Bob Stopp a call at 577-4127. Wannabe a coach? Give Bob a call!

Interested in working weekends at our new Pistol Range? MCCS is taking applications for Recreational Shooting Supervisors and Attendants. Starting salary is \$7.00 per hour. Call 577-4117 for more information.

Today’s Black History Question: When did the first male Black Marine receive his commission? Who was he? Same deal as last week, first 5 correct answers and lunch at the Club is on me.



photo by Sgt. Arthur Stone

(Above) Gunnery Sgt. Gary B. Cross Jr. received the Medal of Heroism from the State Department during a ceremony, Feb. 4, at 2d Reconnaissance Battalion, Camp Lejeune, N.C. His wife, Andrea, and his two daughters, Aleisha and Brooke, also attended the ceremony. (Right) The aftermath of the Embassy Bombing in Kenya, where Sgt. Jesse N. Aliganga was killed. Despite the loss of a fellow Marine, all the Marines kept their heads up and ensured order was maintained and security measures were enforced.



Weapons Company Marines spring 'TRAP'



Photo by Staff Sgt. Glenn Holloway

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS TRAINING AREA, Hawaii – 1st Lt. Corey Collier, platoon commander 81 mm Platoon, Weapons Company, Battalion Landing Team 1/4, directs his Marines while they engage targets during live fire and maneuver training Feb. 1 at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. The Marines of 81 mm Platoon, Weapons Company, Battalion Landing Team 1/4 underwent a live-fire and maneuver Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel training here Feb. 1-2. The training was conducted by the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) as part of its sustainment training. During the training, the platoon secured a landing zone and simulated rescuing a downed pilot. For 81 mm platoon, this was not the first time for this type of training, however, it was the first time they have used live ammunition and have operated in a new and unfamiliar environment. The unfamiliar environment was perhaps the hardest part of the training because the Marines did not know what to expect, so awareness had to be maintained at all times throughout the training.

Marine honored for actions in bombing aftermath

by Sgt. Arthur Stone

PAO, MCB Camp Lejeune

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. — Marines of 2d Reconnaissance Battalion, 2d Marine Division, witnessed the decoration of a hero Feb. 4.

Whitefield, N.H., native, Gunnery Sgt. Gary B. Cross Jr., Headquarters and Service Company, 2d Reconnaissance Bn., received the Medal of Heroism for his actions during Operation Resolute Response in the aftermath of the bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, Aug. 7, 1998.

His wife Andrea of Saco, Maine, and his two daughters, Aleisha and Brooke, attended the ceremony. After the citation was read, his wife pinned the decoration on him. Cross was also presented certificates of appreciation from the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and the 5th Special Forces Group for his courage and dedication during the crisis.

Cross had taken over as the commander of the Marine Security Guard detachment at the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi only three weeks prior to the terrorist attack. The bombing, attributed to the terrorist actions of millionaire Osama Bin Laden, was classified as the worst disaster in State Department history, with one Marine and more than 200 Kenyans killed by the blast that rocked the embassy compound.

"All hell broke loose after the bombing," said Cross. "Within minutes, we had looters in the embassy and a crowd outside estimated at 5,000 people. We had to provide security for the State Department personnel, search for classified material, search for injured and dead, and also to keep the people out."

The Marines' no. 1 concern was to search for their fallen comrade, Sgt. Jesse N. Aliganga. They soon discovered that he had

perished in the blast, but they did not find his body until 27 hours after the attack on the embassy.

The Marines draped Aliganga's body with the U.S. flag that had been ripped down by the explosion and carried him out.

"When we came out on that step, they knew a U.S. Marine was coming out," said Cross. "The crowd, which had been chanting, silenced and parted like the Red Sea. They let us through, because they knew we were bringing out one of our own."

The Marines kept the lid on a very volatile situation, setting up a perimeter around the building with the help of a group of U.S. Special Forces team members that had been working at the embassy. They kept looters out and kept further hostilities from developing.

"Just keeping the Marines' heads in the game and everyone cool under pressure was the hardest task," said Cross. "It would have been very easy to lash out at the crowd for what had happened, but that would have only started a full-scale rumble."

Cross transferred back to the fleet only a few months after the incident, and received orders to 2d Reconnaissance Bn. He found his place with his new unit, working as the personnel officer in charge of the personnel section.

He has turned the section around in the short period of time he has been there, according to his commanding officer, Lt. Col. Michael Dean.

"Cross is a hero," said Dean. "We knew what he had done before he came here. We pursued getting him when we found out he was returning to 2d Marine Division. He's not only a hero, he's one of the most technically proficient staff noncommissioned officers there is."

S E R E

Survival
Evasion
Resistance
Escape

Learning now means surviving later

by Cpl. Kimberly L. Wilkie

PAO, MCAS Miramar

Located 80 miles north of San Diego at 3,000 feet in the High Chaparral Desert region of Southern California, the 1,500 acres of the Navy's Remote Training Site is the stage for the fielding training and practical exercises of the Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape school, or SERE.

The school is broken into three phases. The first phase begins with academics at Naval Air Station North Island, Calif., with classroom introduction and instruction.

The military Code of Conduct, the Geneva Convention and basic survival information is taught in a familiar classroom atmosphere.

The second and third phases, the field training evolution and the resistance training laboratory, both take place at the remote site.

"When the students arrive, they hit the ground running," said Petty Officer 1st Class Oscar P. Garza, operations specialist with the

Fleet Aviation Special Operations Training Group Pacific, NAS North Island. He is a field instructor at the SERE remote training site.

The training site is not the friendliest

place on earth.

The presence of aggressive rattlesnakes and brown recluse spiders gives students a healthy respect of wildlife habitat. Bobcats, cougars and coyotes sound through the night with the echoes of distant wolf cries, giving a listener a creepy feeling that sort of lingers on the back of the neck.

Even the vegetation, thick with sharp needles and spines, passively defend them-

selves. The environment truly offers more creatures than comforts. However, these threats are only the beginning.

Temperatures hover around freezing in the night to upwards of 130 de-

grees during the hottest days of summer with only limited shelter. Garza. Students not only learn about constructing a shelter to keep them warm and dry, they learn how to construct shelters that can protect them from heat and ultra-violet rays. Both tactical shelter and shelters designed to attract as much attention as possible are demonstrated.

Water is also a primary cause of concern with the students. There are no drinking fountains, taps, or even garden hoses. Since hydrating the body becomes paramount to simply staying alive, finding and carrying water is one of the first survival skills students learn.

The students learn the art of finding potable water and the necessity of purifying natural water sources to avoid ingesting bacterium that cause diarrhea and will add to

"When the students arrive, they hit the ground running, [then] the learning curve goes vertical after the first day."

— Petty Officer 1st Class Oscar P. Garza, operations specialist, Fleet Aviation Special Operations Training Group Pacific, NAS North Island

grees during the hottest days of summer with only limited shelter.

"We teach them globally. It would really do them no good if we only taught them how to build survival shelters for this area," said

See SERE School, Page 10



photos by Cpl. Kimberly L. Wilkie

(Top) Petty Officer 1st Class Oscar P. Garza, operations specialist with the Fleet Aviation Special Operations Training Group Pacific, NAS North Island, checks his map to navigate through the night. (Bottom) Garza demonstrates the effectiveness of a tangle trap. While it doesn't mortally wound, it can effectively slow down larger game allowing the hunter to move in for the kill.



by Cpl. Kimberly L. Wilkie

PAO, MCAS Miramar

A state of heightened awareness among SERE students is excruciating the first day in the field. They are learning so much, and everything is new. Everything familiar is gone, and while it is a school environment, it is definitely real to them.

Leadership and self-responsibility is put to the test like never before. The student-leaders are trying to bring together a group of individuals with varying degrees of enthusiasm and knowledge to overcome insurmountable odds.

Have no doubt, the odds are stacked against them because the students are now in the instructor's backyard. The instructors know every square inch of their little playground. The better the skills of the group of students, the more they demand. No one beats the instructors at their own game.

This type of environment is a close simulation to actually being in enemy territory. The enemy hunting for survivors will always have the upper hand, and will always know the lay of their land far beyond any intelligence briefing, according to Garza.

The only possibility coming home alive is the result of living on a very thin edge. The instructors use the students' natural fear and hunger to their advantage. "Fear is an excellent teaching tool," said Garza. The fear and hunger memories will never leave the students.

The days of not paying the closest of attention during mission briefings are behind them. Now their survival instincts kick in ... rapt attention is ensured.

Comfort zones often allow people to feel invincible. The shocking realities of how truly vulnerable they now are makes the students rack their brains, taping into every scrap of retained knowledge to extend their existence.

"PMA [positive mental attitude] and "keeping the faith" are the keys to everyone getting through the course," said Garza.

"Keeping the faith," part of the fourth article of the Code of Conduct is a term the instructors reiterate constantly. The mantra sums up the entire code. The student's cling

to it whenever they feel their fight through the punishing course is getting the best of them. When students overcome their visible weaknesses and doubts, it builds up the morale of the unit like nothing else.

According to Garza when the students set their differences aside and recognize they are Americans and their cause is the same, the group holds strong to that belief. It's what binds them together, and is the source of their confidence in each other. Visible moments of doubt do not disintegrate that confidence.

"There can be no 'zero defect mentality' while out here," said Garza.

In fact, times of testing often become a force multiplier in the groups' confidence when someone successfully comes back to the "faith." As the days progress and students meet their field exercise objectives, that confidence, or faith, oftentimes maybe the only thing the students can cling to.

The practical application of the resistance-training laboratory is designed to give students a safe place to learn to survive in a captured environment. While the training is hard, the professionals who conduct it know the training must be.

"People make mistakes. I would rather them makes those mistakes with me, than with someone who would kill them," said Garza. While this portion of training is classified, according to Chief Petty Officer Bobby Cowan, leading chief petty officer of the field division, the course objectives follow the code of conduct. Since there are no "drop on requests," the school is set up to facilitate success.

"We are going to do everything we can to make sure you're successful," said Garza.

'Code of Conduct'

Article I

I am an American, fighting in the armed forces which guard my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense.

Article II

I will never surrender of my own free will. If in command I will never surrender the members of my command while they still have the means to resist.

Article III

If I am captured, I will continue to resist by all means available. I will make every effort to escape and aid others to escape. I will accept neither parole nor special favors from the enemy.

Article IV

If I become a prisoner of war, I will keep the faith with my fellow prisoners. I will give no information nor take part in any action which might be harmful to my comrades. If I am senior, I will take command. If not, I will obey the lawful orders of those appointed over me and will back them up in every way.

Article V

When questioned, should I become a prisoner of war, I am required to give name, rank, service number and date of birth. I will evade answering further questions to the utmost of my ability. I will make no oral or written statements disloyal to my country and its allies or harmful to their cause.

Article VI

I will never forget that I am an American, responsible for my actions, and dedicated to the principles which made my country free. I will trust in my God and in the United States of America.



photos by Cpl. Kimberly L. Wilkie

(Left) Tactical shelters can not only hide someone effectively, but they are quite efficient in conserving body heat. (Right) Finding protein is simple if you know where to look, as Garza demonstrates by turning over rocks and logs to reveal a smorgasbord of grubs and termites. Garza explained that a termite diet is higher in protein than anything offered at McDonalds.

Diet, calories and more ... Gamut of nutrition offered at fitness center workshop

by Cpl. Carolyn S. Sittig

PAO, MCAS Miramar

The Miramar Fitness Center recently began holding a six-week fitness class, "Chose to Lose."

The classes are held every Tuesday from 5-6 p.m. in the Fitness Center conference room until the end of February. The class is open to everyone who wants to lose weight or learn about nutrition and healthy eating.

The class is taught by Julie Carlson, a Miramar fitness coordinator. Carlson's first class focuses on the fundamentals of nutrition including on daily caloric intake and the importance of a balanced diet.

The class promotes healthy eating and how to apply nutrition fundamentals to lose weight. The classes cover different topics, but they all tie in together, said Carlson.

"Each class talks about something else, but someone will be able to walk away with some good information," said Carlson.

Carlson stresses eating a healthy, well-balanced diet combined with exercise is a sure way to keep the body healthy. She further instills how essential it is for people to keep their heart healthy.

"You only have one heart muscle, if you don't protect your heart, you will die," said Carlson. She adds the heart is essential to living because unlike other parts of the body that have several muscles such as the arms, the heart works as a single unit.

If the heart gets damaged there are no other muscles to take up the slack. Once the heart is worn out, there is not much a person can do.

The common unspoken consensus among most people is that when someone has a heart attack that person must have been overweight. Carlson says weight has nothing to do with it. "You can't see someone's heart and arteries.

They may look skinny, but you can't see what's on the inside," she added. Even the skinniest person can have heart problems if he doesn't take care of himself.

Part of taking care of the body means eating the right kinds of food in the right amounts. "If you overeat no matter what it

is (i.e. salad), you're going to gain weight," said Carlson.

If you're constantly eating fat, you will build up cholesterol in your heart, and plaque (which builds up around the artery walls and constricts the blood flow), can lead to a heart attack or a stroke. By watching your saturated fats, it's better for your heart and you won't build up so much plaque in the arteries.

Carlson said Marines should consume no more than 30 percent fat from their total calories each day.

If a Marine ate 2,000 calories each day, he should eat no more than 600 calories from fat.

If a Marine wants to lose weight, the best way is by cutting calories and exercising. Exercising speeds up the body's metabolism, which helps burn off calories.

Another way to help the body burn calories is by eating smaller meals throughout the day rather than three large meals, said Carlson. "Smaller meals are more easily processed and burn off quickly," she adds.

She suggests eating yogurt and a banana for breakfast, a piece of fruit or an energy bar for a snack. For lunch, eat something small like perhaps a salad and soup or a sandwich.

Though many Marines may know about how the metabolism works and other nutritional aspects, they can still gain valuable information from attending these classes.

"I think people stand to learn a lot about nutrition. I could never know it all, but I can get more in-depth information here," said Cpl. Jason Faulk, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron air traffic controller.



Photo by Cpl. Carolyn S. Sittig

Greg Magill (right), base fire station engineer, and Eric Brue (left), base firefighter clean up a portion of Interstate 15 that the Local Firefighters chapter adopted through the Adopt-A-Highway program. After the suggestion of Brue, the station thought being involved in this project was one way they could give back to the community and keep the area surrounding the base clean. They encourage any personnel interested in helping with their clean up effort to come by the station or call 577-6137. They are also holding a charity golf tournament March 1, at 9 a.m. here. Proceeds go to the San Diego Burn Institute.

Watch out for heart health

by Cpl. Carolyn S. Sittig

PAO, MCAS Miramar

In recent years, many people have come to believe high blood pressure and heart-related diseases are not as deadly or common as they have been in the past. Instead, the focus has shifted toward other diseases like HIV and AIDS, causing many Americans to become complacent about high blood pressure and heart disease, according to the Mayo Clinic Web site: www.mayohealth.org/mayo/0001/htm/bloodpressure.htm.

However, though there is a decrease of awareness, high blood pressure affects roughly 50 million Americans and a third of those do not even know they have it, according to the Mayo Clinic.

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the walls of the heart's arteries, while the blood is being transported throughout the body.

"High blood pressure is one of the leading causes of disability or death due to stroke, heart attack, heart failure and kidney failure, making it one of the most common chronic illnesses in America," according to the Web site.

The fact that so many people are unknowingly affected with high blood pressure shows the people need to be educated about this danger and take measures to prevent or reduce their risk of getting it.

What makes this complacency and decreasing awareness distressing to health care professionals, is there is no known cure for high blood pressure, only proactive care of a person's body. "However, the good news is the condition is both preventable and treatable. Adjustments in lifestyle and, if necessary, medication can help people take control of their blood pressure and keep it at a safe level," said Dr. Sheldon G. Sheps in an article on the Mayo Clinic Web site.

There are four factors that affect high blood pressure. If watched can help people keep their blood pressures at normal and healthy levels.

Factor 1: Maintain a healthy weight

Carrying around extra weight raises blood pressure, according to the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute Web site: www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/hbp/prevhbp/index.htm.

"Being overweight can make you two to six times more likely to develop high blood pressure than if you are at your desirable weight," according to the NHLBI Web site. Not only is extra weight an issue, but where a Marine carries it is also important.

Marines who tend to gain weight around their stomach have a higher health risk than Marines who gain weight around the hips and thighs. The NHLBI reminds Marines that regardless of where extra weight is, losing it can reduce the risk of high blood pressure.

Factor 2: Be more physically active

Being physically active lowers bad cholesterol levels and raises the good cholesterol levels, while helping lower high blood pressure, according to the NHLBI Web site. People who are physically active have a 20-50 percent lower chance of getting high blood pressure than people who are not active, according to NHLBI.

However, Marines do not necessarily have to be marathon runners to benefit from being active. Moderate aerobic activities like swimming, running and biking for 30 minutes three to four times each week can condition the heart and lungs, thus improving

the fitness of the heart and lungs, according to the NHLBI Web site.

Factor 3: Choose foods lower in salt

Most Marines consume more salt than they need and Americans as a whole tend to have higher blood pressure than other countries, according to the Web site. When Marines cut back on salt, it lowers their blood pressure.

The recommended daily amount of salt is about one teaspoon of salt or 2,400 milligrams.

Factor 4: Drink alcoholic beverages in moderation

Drinking in excess raises blood pressure and can lead to the development of high blood pressure. Because of the danger, NHLBI recommends consuming no more than 2 drinks a day. A drink is either a one and a half ounce of 80-proof or one ounce of 100-proof whiskey, five ounces of wine or 12 ounces of beer (regular or light), according to the Web site.

If left unnoticed and untreated, high blood pressure can lead to a number of medical problems, according to the NHLBI Web site. One medical condition is Arteriosclerosis, which is hardening of the arteries. When a Marine has high blood pressure the arteries can become thick and stiff. This speeds up the build up of cholesterol and fats in the blood vessels, which prevents the blood from flowing through the body and can eventually lead to a stroke or heart attack.

A heart attack can also be a result of high blood pressure. High blood pressure forces the body to work harder, which causes the



Blaz'in the competition

by Lance Cpl. Kristopher S. Haloj

PAO, MCAS Miramar

The Miramar Women's Basketball team recently kicked off their regular Southern Pacific region season. So far, with a record of 1-1, they're a force to be reckoned with.

The team entered the season with a championship trophy under their belts after stomping out the competition in the Travis Millenium Shoot Out Basketball Tournament Feb. 4-6. During the tournament, they defeated Camp Pendleton 41-37, and they defeated Fort Irwin, twice including the championship game.

Currently, the team consists of coach Denis Smith who has coached at the middle school, high school and college

levels. He now coaches 14 of Miramar's finest; Shannon Wilson, Gina Monte, Tawnya Harrington, Crystal Sargeant, Tina Burt, Sunshine Clark, Ericka McMullen, Kristin Dale, Janeen Wadzita, April Singleton, Deniece Newton, Cheryl Gainer, Opal Robertson and Jodi Sitton.

"We have a very talented team. Our players have the ability to score 80 points a game and win every game. We just need to play consistently, offensively and defensively," Smith said.

According to Smith, basketball is a game, something to be enjoyed.

"Overall I want them playing together as a team, but I also want them to remember it's a game. I want them to have fun out there, if they're not having fun, there's no use in them playing," Smith said.

heart to thicken and stretch. The heart will not function normally and fluids will accumulate in the lungs.

Kidney damage is another problem that can occur. The kidneys filter wastes. High blood pressure can narrow and thicken the blood vessels of the kidney. The kidneys will filter fewer wastes, so the wastes will build up and the kidneys will fail.

The last medical condition that can occur from high blood pressure is a stroke. When the arteries begin to narrow, blood flow to

the brain is constricted. When a blood clot blocks an artery or a blood vessel in the brain breaks, then a stroke occurs.

"There has been increasing complacency as the fear of cancer and AIDS takes its place. Complacency leads to stagnation. The public and health care community need to heed this wake up call and work to achieve goal blood pressure in each person and not be satisfied with less. Goal blood pressure represents control," said Sheps in the Mayo Clinic Web site article.

Las Vegas Fun Run slated

MCCS hosts the annual Las Vegas Healthy Heart Fun Run/Walk on Thursday, at 11:15 a.m.

The event is free, and all participants pick up playing cards at stops along the course. The best poker hand to cross the finish line wins the grand prize, and second and third best hands will win prizes, as well. Select from a 3.3 mile run course or a 1.5-mile walk course.

No registration is necessary, and the event begins in front of the MCCS Semper Fit Fitness and Sports Center, Bldg. 2471.

For more information, call 577-4128 or 577-4129.

Parent's Night Out

Parents — enjoy a night out today! The Youth Activities Center will entertain your children while you shop, dine out or relax. Space is limited; to sign up, call 577-4136.

Sports Shorts

Interested in Varsity Volleyball? Sign-ups are being taken now for coaches, as well as men's and women's players.

To participate, sign up at the main gym, or call the Sports Office at 577-1202.

Sign ups are also being accepted at the base gym for Varsity Women's Softball.

The 50-meter pool is now open additional lap swimming hours. Now swim on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. For more information, call the pool at 577-4140.

Parent's Night Out

Parents — enjoy a night out today! The Youth Activities Center will entertain your



children while you shop, dine out or relax. Space is limited; to sign up, call 577-4136.

Spring Camp

The Youth Center will offer Spring Camp, March 27-April 21. Registration begins Feb. 28 for current Youth Center Before/After School program participants.

Starting March 6, active duty living or working at MCAS Miramar can enroll their children in spring camp. Open enrollment begins March 13.

For fees and additional information, call the Youth Center at 577-4136.

Financial Management

Want to break free from debt? Looking to buy a new car? Ready to invest? Free individual financial counseling is available through the Community Services Center, Monday through Friday.

To take advantage of this service, call 577-1331 to schedule an appointment.

TRAP, continued from page 1

were warming up the “Super Stallions,” and making their last inspections before the day’s action. As the sun began to warm the flight-line, Lt. Col. Fred Wenger III, commanding officer, HHM-361, and Bridgewater, acting as his copilot, take the lead CH-53E, and taxi out, taking off into the Senora Desert on the Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel mission.

Minutes into the flight, aggressors are spotted. The part of the aggressor being played out by Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 267 UH-1Ws and AH-1Ns from Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., and VMFT-401 F-14s and F-5s, stationed at MCAS Yuma, Ariz.

Cpl. Jason A. Palmer and Lance Cpl. Michael R. Lozen, crew chiefs aboard the CO’s aircraft stood at the ready on their machine guns, watching for aggressor aircraft while the CH-53E zipped along the terrain, maneuvering to stay out of sight, and reach their destination. Aggressor aircraft swarm around the three CH-53Es, but the large aircraft are swift, as they maneuver through mountain gorges, over ridges, and into canyons. Upon reaching the coordinates of the downed aircraft, simulated bombs are deployed to disintegrate the sensitive remains of the F-14.

Evading radar and missile locks, Wenger and Bridgewater manage to return to base unscathed, but the mission is not over yet.

SERE School, continued from page 6

dehydration and sanitation concerns. Again thinking globally, the students learn some of the cultures of people who live in water scarce regions.

“Bedouin people in the Middle East will put water out in pots at night. Anyone is allowed to fill his or her containers during the night from this supply without being harmed,” said Garza.

Information like this can mean this difference between surviving and ignorantly dying a gruesome death in the desert.

“The human body can live seven to 10 days without water,” said Garza, “but that doesn’t mean that you live that long and then die. It’s an ugly death that begins with headaches and cramps three days into dehydration.” Water isn’t the only necessity that requires finding.

The natural comfort of food is found only in what the students are able to glean from the surrounding environment. The instructors teach identifying plants and the sustenance, medicinal, general purpose and even deadly properties of each.

Overcoming food aversions comes easier to some than others. The students also learn the art of securing animal proteins and fats in creative ways.

“I would never ask them to do anything I wouldn’t do myself,” said Garza about the techniques students must use to sustain themselves.

Land navigation lessons learned in the light of day take on a new importance when applied to navigating courses the length of 12 football fields through the dark of night.

Keeping the global theme throughout the course, students learn to use metric measurements, or “clicks” [kilometers], for their navigation lessons.

Garza explained not all rescues maybe executed by fellow Americans; America being just about the last country not actively using the metric system. It can prove very

There is still a pilot out there in need of extraction.

Minutes pass by as the “Super Stallion” is refueled and the pilots return to MAWTS-1 to await the green light to go in for the rescue. Finally, the signal is received to go for it. The pilots and crewmembers saddle up, and the “Super Stallion” leaps into the air and is off again.

With bogies darting across the sky, the CH-53E glides across the terrain, banking and turning to avoid the aggressors, creating ‘wagon wheel’ paths through the sky before setting down among the Arizona cacti to retrieve the downed pilots.

Lifting off, a matter of seconds after touching down in the desert, the Super Stallion is back in the air with the rescued pilots safely strapped in, leaving a UH-1W “Cobra” in a dust storm as it climbs up through a mountain pass, and heads back to base. In the Marine Corps, everyone goes home. “I think this is a good mission for us,” said Bridgewater, showing excitement at the days events. “It’s a great learning experience for our pilots.”

“I can’t wait till we can come back,” added Wenger, who hopes to bring another crew in the summer. Wenger believes in treating every mission as a tactical one, and during MDTC, it was tactically done. Wenger also added, in a conversation with his copilot, “It’s about being a Marine, and thinking like a Marine, no matter what you’re doing.”

important to effective communication.

After a long day, extending into the late hours of the night, of practical exercises and field instruction, the students sleep in the outdoors using whatever skills they picked up from their instructors.

The first night sleeping on the ground with their poncho and parachutes sets the stage for the first lesson of an early morning. How to build a fire.

“The learning curve goes vertical after the first day in the field,” said Garza.

As support staff and other instructors wander into the unit instruction areas wide-eyed apprehension fills the eyes of students as “strangers” approach the small tactical fires.

The students newly gained heightened sense of awareness takes nothing for granted and muscles quickly seize up; changing body position instinctively from their immediate task of warming off the evening chill to the best possible position to fight or flee.

Once a danger level is determined to be low, the students again relax a bit.

Their noses, reddened by the cold, are the most distinguishable features on their faces accompanied by a day’s growth of beard. Their disheveled appearance, complete with wrinkled dirty clothing with matching grimy faces that haven’t touched any available water, give clues to what they’re experiencing. Grooming and preening is now definitely at the bottom of the hierarchy for survival in these surroundings.

“My comfort level was directly proportional to the temperature,” a student said when Garza asked how his night was. Garza uses the response to give the group an opportunity for a few laughs.

And no matter what students believe they are capable of, the instructors know they are capable of more.

“People never learn their limits until they are pushed past them,” said Garza.

For more information about attending SERE school, contact your career planner.

TIGER U,
continued from page 1

but we’re still putting things together,” said Bridgewater. “What we are doing is taking the brand new copilots when they check in. Before they can fly or do anything, they belong to me.

“I give them the tests and quizzes, and make sure they are going through everything so they have a foundation to go from; so they can learn more about the aircraft and tactics as they progress in their aviation careers,” he said.

As the freshman pilots move from copilots to HACs, Section Leaders, and Division Leaders, Bridgewater hopes they will have a better understanding of the concepts and issues when they go on operations such as Marine Division Tactics Course, Combined Arms Exercises, and WTL.

Future plans for Flying Tiger U is to make CD ROMs available to the attendees, built from MAWTS-1 class disks, together with other compiled instructions. This will be a resource the pilots can retain throughout their careers. “There are a lot of things I’d like to implement with this, but it’s just going to take time,” said Bridgewater. “But every hop is making us more tactical.”

MCCS,
continued from page 4

tion will be worth barely half that much in 10 years. In other words, you will need \$1,800 in 10 years to buy what \$1,000 buys today.

The fourth obstacle to your financial success is *Taxes*. This is the one we all love to *hate*. According to the Tax Foundation, Tax Freedom Day is May 5, meaning that every dollar you earn from the first day of the year until then goes to taxes. To put it another way, you work nearly three hours of each workday just to pay taxes. No wonder we find it so difficult to save money.

If you’re ready to move past these obstacles and start building wealth now, contact Tom Graneau, Personal Financial Management Counselor, for free assistance. Call (858) 577-1331 for an appointment.

Snowboarding,
continued from page 3

ner lessons start. Plan to arrive in plenty of time to spend an hour getting the feel of the board that is attached to your feet and the art of falling, rolling over and getting up for a brief period. Then go to the lesson and seek professional help. The expense will be a good investment in fun. Snowboard instructors recommend a first lesson of two hours. That’s enough time to cover the basics and get you started on the hills. More importantly, it will get you on and off the lift without causing a major pile of bodies at the lift drop off point.

Pain

Falling on a snowboard can be very painful. The majority of snowboarders wince when you ask about their first time. You will

fall on your “toosh,” wrists, knees and every other part of your body. This is where a good fitting helmet will protect your head, and wrist guards will help to avoid sprained wrists. Kneepads and elbow pads will also help soften the blow when you fall. I’ve never seen a “toosh” pad, but I suppose you could strap a phone book or pillow on if image isn’t critical!

Do’s and Don’ts (mostly don’ts)

Do avoid heavily populated areas until you learn the basics of turning in both directions and stopping by using the board vice your body parts.

Don’t attempt the slopes that are too steep for you. They always look steeper from the top than the bottom.

If you find yourself on a slope that’s too steep don’t panic. It is normal and we all get there sooner or later. The key to success is how you handle the situation. Work back and forth across the slope vice heading straight down. Control your speed and take the ditch method, if necessary, of stopping sooner rather than later. (It hurts less to fall at slow speeds).

Don’t take jumps without checking the landing area first. Take a look at the run to make sure you won’t have to speed check (slow down) immediately after landing. Make sure there’s a slope to land on vice flat ground (it makes for a softer landing).

Don’t get in over your head and don’t go so fast that you feel like you’re out of control. It is human nature to push our ability, but never continue when you are out of control. This is dangerous to you and others on the slopes.

Don’t push yourself too hard. If you are tired, take a rest, and don’t forget to drink plenty of water.

Don’t get too disappointed and frustrated. Keep trying, it is perfectly normal to spend the first two – three days going from knees to “toosh.” Relax and watch the other beginners and laugh at them. After all, they are probably laughing at you too!

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drifting of other teeth, which may eventually cause overcrowding and other problems.

Through awareness in helping their child maintain healthy teeth, parents can see fewer trips to the dentist, save money and keep their child’s discomfort to a minimum.

